

## **Handling ARL Numbered Messages and Welfare Messages**

Please realize that when reports of major disasters that result in serious injuries and death in the disaster area, egregious mental/emotional pain is experienced by distant relatives and friends. This is one way that we may provide a service to the public.

### **Welfare Messages**

During disasters, amateur (ham) radio has a long history in providing communications services for the public. One aspect is providing families and friends of our health and welfare status when conventional methods are disrupted during a disaster. Mothers, fathers, sons, daughters, sisters, brothers, wives, husbands, and close friends may be separated and emotionally distraught when reports mention injuries, death, and destruction.

In such situations, only after emergency and priority communications are handled, outgoing messages from the disaster area can take precedence. Although there may be many incoming welfare inquiries, they are discouraged, as precedence is given to outgoing messages.

An efficient method of handling outgoing WELFARE traffic should a temporary null in EMERGENCY and PRIORITY traffic occur, is for the net manager to designate one station to be a NTS liaison station to take the traffic to NTS nets. The station holding outgoing WELFARE Traffic and the liaison station can move off frequency to pass the traffic and then after complete return to net frequency. As an alternative stations may be directed to a NTS or Welfare Net. Similarly, if there exists a Winlink equipped liaison, the WELFARE traffic can be passed the same way.

**EMERGENCY** traffic (immediate threats to life or property) is given top precedence, followed by **PRIORITY** traffic such as mass care (food, shelter, water, cots, tools, medical supplies, medicines), situational awareness, damage assessment, human resource needs, etc. The lowest precedence is **WELFARE** traffic (outgoing notifications to families and friends).

In the Radiogram Header/preamble the letter, W, is written as the precedence and is sent as “W” on CW and the other digital modes. On Voice it is voiced, “welfare”. The ARRL and Radio Relay International lists a numbered system recognized planet wide that provides a template for Welfare messages, called ARL Numbered messages.

### **Welfare Traffic within the Neighborhood Block System CERT, NERT, etc.**

Often due to the lack of available operators and time, WELFARE traffic is often delayed or never handled, unfortunately. Often it is collected at shelters, gathering, and evacuation sites, but it can also be obtained via neighborhood communications hubs and CERT block coordinators/captains. Volunteers can collect these messages without needing to have a radio if they have a radio operator nearby. The neighborhoods can then send the message via GMRS/FRS radio to the Neighborhood GMRS/Ham gateway station who will send it over

the ham network

The message should include:

the time/date,

the name of the addressee,

address,

phone number,

email address,

And your signature (name)

The email address is very important as the ham radio service can send the message directly by email once the message enters the international digital ham Radio Message Service (RMS Express).

### Templates

This is a list of canned outgoing health and welfare messages. Just fill in the customized blanks. Feel free to compose your own customized message. Try to keep the message concise (less than 20 words is best).

This list is used by the American Radio Relay League (ARRL) .

Note that ARL ONE through ARL SIX, EIGHT, TEN, THIRTEEN, FOURTEEN, SIXTEEN, EIGHTEEN, and TWENTY are useful in a disaster for outgoing health and welfare (W) traffic. Conciseness is best.

ARL #	Expansion
ONE	Everyone safe here. Please don't worry.
TWO	Coming home as soon as possible.
THREE	Am in _____ hospital. Receiving excellent care and recovering fine.
FOUR	Only slight property damage here. Do not be concerned about disaster reports.
FIVE	Am moving to new location. Send no further mail or communication. Will inform you of new address when relocated.
SIX	Will contact you as soon as possible.
EIGHT	Need additional _____ mobile or portable equipment for immediate emergency use.
TEN	Please contact _____. Advise to standby and provide further emergency information, instructions or assistance.
THIRTEEN	Medical emergency situation exists here.

FOURTEEN	Situation here becoming critical. Losses and damage from _____ increasing.
SIXTEEN	Property damage very severe in this area.
EIGHTEEN	Please contact me as soon as possible at _____.
TWENTY	Temporarily stranded. Will need some assistance. Please contact me at _____.

Below is an easily reproduced formatted template that can be used at Shelters, Gathering Points, Neighborhood Hubs, Evacuation Centers, or Block ICPs.

## **SEND A MESSAGE TO CLOSE RELATIVES AND FRIENDS HERE**

**Please keep it short and provide:**

**the time/date:**

**the name of the addressee:**

**address:**

**their phone number:**

**email address:**

**If the email is to a relative or close friend, notify them in advance to expect a test only message. If security is an issue, use [karoechoelections@gmail.com](mailto:karoechoelections@gmail.com) as the email.**

**And your signature (name):**

**Note that the email address is very important as the ham radio service can send the message directly by email once the message enters the international digital ham Radio Message Service (RMS Express).**

**This is a list of canned outgoing health and welfare messages. Just fill in the customized blanks. Feel free to compose your own concise message of 20 words or less.**

<b>ARL #</b>	<b>Expansion</b>
<b>ONE</b>	<b>Everyone safe here. Please don't worry.</b>

<b>TWO</b>	<b>Coming home as soon as possible.</b>
<b>THREE</b>	<b>Am in _____ hospital. Receiving excellent care and recovering fine.</b>
<b>FOUR</b>	<b>Only slight property damage here. Do not be concerned about disaster reports.</b>
<b>FIVE</b>	<b>Am moving to new location. Send no further mail or communication. Will inform you of new address when relocated.</b>
<b>SIX</b>	<b>Will contact you as soon as possible.</b>
<b>EIGHT</b>	<b>Need additional _____ mobile or portable equipment for immediate emergency use.</b>
<b>TEN</b>	<b>Please contact _____. Advise to standby and provide further emergency information, instructions or assistance.</b>
<b>THIRTEEN</b>	<b>Medical emergency situation exists here.</b>
<b>FOURTEEN</b>	<b>Situation here becoming critical. Losses and damage from _____ increasing.</b>
<b>SIXTEEN</b>	<b>Property damage very severe in this area.</b>
<b>EIGHTEEN</b>	<b>Please contact me as soon as possible at _____.</b>
<b>TWENTY</b>	<b>Temporarily stranded. Will need some assistance. Please contact me at _____.</b>

### **Examples:**

Example: ARL Three Kaiser Vallejo

Example: ARL One

Example: ARL Eighteen Uncle Joe's

Or simply write out the message in plain language.

### **Instructions for Ham Operators Using the ARL Message numbers.**

Ham radio operators will commonly experience ARL numbered messages on ham traffic nets. (Reference HF daily nets on

<https://www.karoocho.net/workstreams/coordination#h.kf33fb4rpay6>.)

National Traffic Service nets (NTS) operate daily across the entire nation. They specialize in handling formal written traffic for the general public, both accurately and efficiently. Hams have done so in various forms since the dawn of radio. All amateur operators are encouraged to participate in the NTS.

ARL numbered messages are especially frequent during holidays, special events and disasters. Using ARL numbered radiogram formats saves time and increases throughput. There are only two unique characteristics to keep in mind using the ARL numbered radiogram procedure. In the word count (check), precede the check with the letters. "ARL". In the text write out ARL, as an independent letter group and spell out the number. For example, a Welfare message may begin:

NR 207 W W1AW ARL 7 Newington Red Cross HQ CT 0802 Jan 2

TO: Jane Doe

5555 south Main

Lost Hope CT 00101

Phone:555 555 5555

Email: [JanepDoe@nowhere.org](mailto:JanepDoe@nowhere.org)

BREAK

ARL TWENTY Aunt Belle's on March 27

BREAK

Signature: Dad

### **Addendum: Precedences**

All messages handled by Amateur Radio should contain precedences -- that is, an evaluation of each message importance, made by the originating station. A precedence pertains to the order of handling. There are four precedences in the ARRL message form: **Emergency, Priority (P), Welfare (W) and Routine (R)**, in that order of handling. When they appear on a net or any other kind of circuit, messages will be handled in this order.

#### **1 Emergency**

Any message having life and death urgency to any person or group of persons, which is transmitted by Amateur Radio in the absence of regular commercial facilities. This includes official messages of welfare agencies during emergencies requesting supplies, materials or instructions vital to relief to stricken populace in emergency areas. During normal times, it will be very rare. On Voice CW, RTTY, AMTOR, PACTOR, packet, and other digital modes, this designation will always be spelled out. When in doubt, do not use this designation.

The generally accepted definition of Emergency Communications occurs when impending or actual conditions are jeopardizing public health and safety, i.e., when

there is an immediate or direct threat to life, health, and/or property.

## **2 Priority**

Use abbreviation, P, on CW, RTTY, AMTOR, PACTOR, packet, and other digital modes. On voice, voice use the full word, PRIORITY. This classification is for important messages having a specific time limit, official messages not covered in the emergency category, press dispatches and emergency-related traffic not of the utmost urgency.

Note: Although EMERGENCY is well defined the line between Emergency and Priority depends on the degree of urgency, which is not always black and white. Err on the side of emergency when in a life-threatening situation.

“The difference between emergency and urgency are set by the government and the agencies which plan them and manage them. The emergency for medical professionals, for pilots, for natural disaster management agencies are different and compiled in their rule books.

The main difference between emergency and urgency is that in emergency there is immediate threat to life, health, property, or environment, whereas in urgency, there is no immediate danger or threat to life, health, property, or environment; but if not taken care in a given period of time, then the situation may turn into an emergency situation.” Medical triage has specific tags for specific injurious conditions (red and yellow being the most cogent regarding precedence. Green, White, and Black tags can be generally ignored.

Red tags - (immediate) are used to label those who cannot survive without immediate treatment but who have a chance of survival. (Use EMERGENCY designation)

Yellow tags - (observation) for those who require observation (and possible later re-triage). Their condition is stable for the moment and, they are not in immediate danger of death. These victims will still need hospital care and would be treated immediately under normal circumstances. Requires evaluation after the Red Tag communications are serviced whether Priority or EMERGENCY?.

Green tags - (wait) are reserved for the walking wounded, who will need medical care at some point, after more critical injuries have been treated. Use PRIORITY designator.

White tags - (dismiss) are given to those with minor injuries for whom a doctor's care is not required.

Black tags - (expectant) are used for the deceased and for those whose injuries are so extensive that they will not be able to survive given the care that is available. (Dismiss)

## **3 Welfare**

This classification, abbreviated as W on CW, RTTY, AMTOR, packet, and digital refers to either an inquiry as to the health and welfare of an individual in the disaster area or an advisory from the disaster area that indicates all is well. Welfare traffic is handled only after all emergency and priority traffic is cleared. The Red Cross equivalent to an

incoming Welfare message is DWI (Disaster Welfare Inquiry).

#### **4 Routine**

Most traffic in normal times will bear this designation. In disaster situations, traffic labeled Routine (R on CW, RTTY, AMTOR, packet), and digital should be handled last, or not at all when circuits are busy with higher-precedence traffic.

#### **A Complete List of All Commonly Used ARL Messages**

ARL numbered messages can have multiple usages. Note that ARL ONE through ARL SIX, EIGHT, TEN, THIRTEEN, FOURTEEN, SIXTEEN, EIGHTEEN, and TWENTY are useful in a disaster for outgoing health and welfare (W) traffic.

#### **Group One – Disaster Related ARL Numbered Texts**

ONE Everyone safe here. Please don't worry.

TWO Coming home as soon as possible.

THREE Am in \_\_\_\_\_ hospital. Receiving excellent care and recovering fine.

FOUR Only slight property damage here. Do not be concerned about disaster reports.

FIVE Am moving to new location. Send no further mail or communication. Will inform you of new address when relocated.

SIX Will contact you as soon as possible.

SEVEN Please reply by Amateur Radio through the amateur delivering this message. This is a free public service.

EIGHT Need additional \_\_\_\_\_ mobile or portable equipment for immediate emergency use.

NINE Additional \_\_\_\_\_ radio operators needed to assist with emergency at this location.

TEN Please contact \_\_\_\_\_. Advise to standby and provide further emergency information, instructions or assistance.

ELEVEN Establish Amateur Radio emergency communications with \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_ MHz.

TWELVE Anxious to hear from you. No word in some time. Please contact me as soon as possible.

THIRTEEN Medical emergency situation exists here.

FOURTEEN Situation here becoming critical. Losses and damage from \_\_\_\_\_ increasing.

FIFTEEN Please advise your condition and what help is needed.

SIXTEEN Property damage very severe in this area.

SEVENTEEN REACT communications services also available. Establish REACT communication with \_\_\_\_\_ on channel \_\_\_\_\_.

EIGHTEEN Please contact me as soon as possible at \_\_\_\_\_.

NINETEEN Request health and welfare report on \_\_\_\_\_. (State name, address and telephone number.)

TWENTY Temporarily stranded. Will need some assistance. Please contact me at \_\_\_\_\_.

TWENTY ONE Search and Rescue assistance is needed by local authorities here. Advise availability.

TWENTY TWO Need accurate information on the extent and type of conditions now existing at your location. Please furnish this information and reply without delay.  
TWENTY THREE Report at once the accessibility and best way to reach your location.  
TWENTY FOUR Evacuation of residents from this area urgently needed. Advise plans for help.  
TWENTY FIVE Furnish as soon as possible the weather conditions at your location.  
TWENTY SIX Help and care for evacuation of sick and injured from this location needed at once.

## **Group Two — ROUTINE MESSAGES**

ARL numbered messages can be used in a multitude of ways.

FORTY SIX Greetings on your birthday and best wishes for many more to come.

FORTY SEVEN Reference your message number \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ delivered on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ UTC.

FIFTY Greetings by Amateur Radio.

FIFTY ONE Greetings by Amateur Radio. This message is sent as a free public service by ham radio operators at \_\_\_\_\_. Am having a wonderful time.

FIFTY TWO Really enjoyed being with you. Looking forward to getting together again.

FIFTY THREE Received your \_\_\_\_\_. It's appreciated; many thanks.

FIFTY FOUR Many thanks for your good wishes.

FIFTY FIVE Good news is always welcome. Very delighted to hear about yours.

FIFTY SIX Congratulations on your \_\_\_\_\_, a most worthy and deserved achievement.

FIFTY SEVEN Wish we could be together

FIFTY EIGHT Have a wonderful time. Let us know when you return.

FIFTY NINE Congratulations on the new arrival. Hope mother and child are well.

\*SIXTY Wishing you the best of everything on \_\_\_\_\_.

SIXTY ONE Wishing you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

\*SIXTY TWO Greetings and best wishes to you for a pleasant \_\_\_\_\_ holiday season.

SIXTY THREE Victory or defeat, our best wishes are with you. Hope you win.

SIXTY FOUR Arrived safely at \_\_\_\_\_.

SIXTY FIVE Arriving \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_. Please arrange to meet me there.

SIXTY SIX DX QSLs are on hand for you at the \_\_\_\_\_ QSL Bureau. Send \_\_\_\_\_ self addressed envelopes.

SIXTY SEVEN Your message number \_\_\_\_\_ undeliverable because of \_\_\_\_\_. Please advise.

SIXTY EIGHT Sorry to hear you are ill. Best wishes for a speedy recovery.

SIXTY NINE Welcome to the \_\_\_\_\_. We are glad to have you with us and hope you will enjoy the fun and fellowship of the organization.

ARL NUMBERS SHOULD BE SPELLED OUT AT ALL TIMES.



\*Can be used for all holidays.

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